A STUDY ON REINFORCING THE TUTOR'S ABILITY IN

MENTORING MULTICULTURAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the tutor in mentoring students who have a multicultural background or are North Korean refugees. Also, it aims to contrive a solution in the reinforcement of the tutor's ability within the mentoring program. Inha University, located in Incheon, utilizes graduate students who major in multicultural education as tutors to perform the mentoring project aimed for students who have a multicultural background or are North Korean refugees.

According to the results, the role of the tutor is to vitalize the mentoring relationship between the manager and mentor. The tutor should support the tasks of the manager by confirming and passing on the information necessary for managing the system, keeping track of the mentor's operation performance, and encouraging the mentor's active participation. Furthermore, tutors can provide help in the difficulties that occur to mentors in the process of studying with and giving mental guidance to the mentees and in the relationship between the mentees and their teachers at school.

Therefore, the capacities needed for tutors to perform such roles are leadership as a manager, ability as a mentor, the ability to control conflicts, self-efficacy and responsibility.

However, we discovered that tutors were going through diverse difficulties such as lack of perception of their roles as tutors, uncertainty of their capacities, absence of long-term systematic information on the progress of the mentoring project, and problems in the relationship with mentors.

As a result, to strengthen the tutor's capabilities, the following actions are necessary: orientation on the tutor's role, recognition of the tutor's role to mentors, arrangement of a manual on the role of the tutor, provision of long-term systematic mentoring information, and the exchange of information through periodic meetings.

KEYWORDS: Mentoring, Multicultural and North Korean Refugee Students, Tutor, Capability, Multiculture

Original Article

INTRODUCTION

Background/ Objectives and Goals

In Korea, the number of foreigners such as immigrant workers and marriage migrant women started to increase in the early 2000s. Especially most of the foreign women became pregnant and gave birth to a baby at the time of immigration, which led to an increase in school aged multicultural children starting from about 2005. The age status of multicultural children in the year 2015 can be seen in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Age Status of Multicultural Children

Age	School Age	Number	Percentage
Total	-	207,693	100%
Under Age 6	Preschool	117,877	56.8%
Age 7~12	Elementary School	56,108	27%
Age 13~15	Middle School	18,827	9%
Age 16~18	High School	14,881	7.2%

Source: Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs (January 1, 2015)

Table 1 displays that the number of multicultural children is increasing rapidly. Furthermore, the number of children going to middle school, elementary school and preschool is in more rapid increase than high school students. This phenomenon is similar to that of marriage migrant women's increase.

The population growth of multicultural students resulted in the arrangement by the Ministry of Education and Science of *An Educational Support Plan for Multicultural Students* in 2006 and in the initiative of multicultural mentoring programs for increasing elementary school students' scholastic achievement and developing their mentality in accordance with the Korea Student Aid Foundation. At first, the mentors were selected among university students majoring in Education, but starting from 2011, the range was expanded to all university students regardless of their major. The beneficiary also expanded from elementary school students to middle and high school students due to the increase of multicultural students entering upper schools.

Mentoring is a system in which a worker with ample experience and knowledge guides new recruits. This system was utilized by companies for a means of developing human resource for the sake of new employees' adaptation, career development and the staff's adjustment to the organization and career management. Although the origin of mentoring lies in corporations, it is intended for diverse targets such as public officials, teachers, school lectures and adolescents. Recently, public institutions such as the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, the Military Manpower Administration, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs and the Seoul Regional Communications Office are also making use of the mentoring system. Not only the mentoring system, but mentoring itself is applied to diverse fields such as guiding criminals and erratic teenagers, and supporting vulnerable social groups such as families of disabled people and multicultural families.

The Graduate School of Multicultural Education of Inha University, located in Incheon, started participating in the *Mentoring Multicultural and North Korean Refugee Student* program in 2011 targeted for multicultural students including those going to middle school. In this regard, graduate students studying for a master's and doctor's degree are taking part as tutors in order to reinforce supervising of mentors.

In mentoring, a tutor is the interim manager whose role is to assist the system manager and mentally support the mentors; a tutor is for the sake of the supervisor's necessity (Bang Hyunhee, 2013).

Usually mentoring is uniformly proceeded by the manager without taking into account the personal characteristics of the mentor and mentee, which leads to a negative effect to the mentoring system (Jin Heeran et al, 2008). In order to operate mentoring effectively, supervision for mentors, matching mentors and mentees according to their personal characteristics, compensation for mentors and reinforcement of mentors' capabilities is in need (Kim Namsuk, 2010).

To reinforce mentors' abilities, orientation and continuous supervision should be provided (Kim Yesung et al, 2007). Mentors are found to be in need of the supervisor's mental support and encouragement (Kim Youngsoon et al, 2012).

The results of a number of researches displayed above emphasize that mentors' capabilities should be reinforced through supervision in order to amplify the effect of mentoring and that in this regard, Inha University is implementing a tutor system for the sake of supporting mentors who participate in the multicultural and North Korean refugee mentoring program. Therefore, the capacity of tutors should also be reinforced to efficiently proceed with a mentoring system which utilizes tutors.

As a result, the purpose of this study is to examine the role of the tutor in mentoring students who have a multicultural background or are North Korean refugees. In this regard, the researchers of this study set up the following two questions to come up with a way of reinforcing tutors' capabilities for the sake of enhancing the effect of multicultural mentoring after confirming the tutors' perception of their own role and capability.First, what is the rightful role and capacity of a tutor? Second, how can the system be improved to reinforce the tutor's capacity?

METHODS

This study is a qualitative researchwhich examines the way to reinforce the capacities of tutors participating in the Multicultural and North Korean Refugee Student Mentoring program implemented since 2009 in accordance with the Korea Student Aid Foundation. Qualitative research is an effective research method to examine the semantic relation shown in individuals (or a small group)or an individual's experience, which is whyit is the rightful method to examine the tutor group.

Based on the participation and experience of graduate students who participated as tutors in the Multicultural and North Korean Refugee Student Mentoring program, we examined the role of the tutor and the ways as to reinforce the tutor's ability within the mentoring program. In order to reach the goals of this study, we prepared open-ended questions based on reference research such as mentoring program implementation documents from 2011 to 2015, and collected data by interviewing tutors on this basis.

We suggested a way to evaluate tutors' roles and reinforce their capabilities based on the data collected through interviews. We analyzed the tutor's role by dividing it into two categories: the tutor-manager relationship and the tutor-mentor relationship.

Table 2: Characteristics of Research Participants

	Age	Period as Tutor	Degree	Interview Date
Participant 1	42	3 semesters	Ph.D.4rd semester	2016.02.15
Participant 2	42	2 semesters	Master's 4rd semester	2016.02.17
Participant 3	29	4 semesters	Master's 4rd semester	2016.02.18
Participant 4	45	3 semesters	Master's	2016.02.18
Participant 5	31	1 semester	Ph.D. 2st semester	2016.02.22

The research participants of Table 2 are graduate students majoring in Multicultural Education at Inha University. Inha University is utilizing graduate students as tutors of the Multicultural and North Korean Refugee Student Mentoring program and about five to seven tutors are in charge of 70 to 100 mentors. This means that one tutor is responsible for 10 to 13 mentors.

RESULTS

According to the research results, the tutor's role is to vitalize the mentoring system between the manager and mentor. In the tutor-manager relationship, tutors aid the manager by confirming and passing on the information necessary for managing the system, keeping track of the mentor's operation performance, and encouraging the mentor's active participation. Also, in the tutor-mentor relationship, tutors act as both a manager and mentor of the mentors. In other words, tutors provide support for hardships that occur to mentors in the process of giving scholastic and mental guidance to mentees and also in the relationship with the mentees' teachers at school.

However, it is discovered that tutors were going through diverse difficulties such as lack of perception of their roles as tutors, uncertainty of their capacities, absence of long-term systematic information on the progress of the mentoring program, and problems in the relationship with mentors.

"It was difficult when there was trouble communicating with mentors." (Research participant 5, 20160222)

To resolve these difficulties, tutors need to build up the following capabilities: leadership as a manager, ability as a mentor, ability to control conflicts, self-efficacy and responsibility. Especially, since the background of this research lies on mentoring for multicultural students, it is of utmost importance that tutors retain approval of the other and understanding of mutual culture.

The Tutor's Role Perceived by Tutors

According to the interviews with tutors, the role of the tutor is to activate the mentoring relationship between the manager and mentor. The tutor should support the tasks of the manager by confirming and delivering information necessary for managing the system, keeping track of the mentor's operation performance and encouraging the mentor's active participation. What is more is that tutors take the role as both a manager and mentor of the mentors. In short, tutors support mentors in the difficult process of giving scholastic and mental guidance to mentees and also in the relationship with the mentees' teachers at school.

"I think that our role is to deliver the information from the executive office to the mentors and check the parts that mentors might be missing." (Research participant 3, 20160218)

"Mentors go through diverse problems during the mentoring program, so I thought that my role is to listen to their problems and provide solutions." (Research participant 2, 20160217)

The above interviews show that some tutors think that their role is to simply be a bridge between the executive office and the mentors. Also, between the relationships with mentors, some tutors think that their role is to support them.

The Tutor's Capability necessary for Tutors

Tutors should act as a mediator who lessens the hardshipsof managers in charge of administrative tasks and aids mentors who are unskilled in administrative affairs, while lessening mentors' mental burden.

"I did not have any difficulties about the fact that this is multicultural mentoring. There were not any questions about that." (Research participant 2, 20160217)

"We need to have a sense of closeness with mentors and be concerned about them." (Research participant 4, 20160218)

"I do not know how others did, but in my case, all I did was encourage the mentors like, 'You did well'." (Research participant 1, 2016.02.15)

Therefore, the capacities needed for tutors to perform such roles are leadership as a manager, ability as a mentor, the ability to control conflicts, self-efficacy and responsibility.

The mentors did not have any prejudice about the fact that their mentees were multicultural, and did not need any help in that aspect.

Measures of Reinforcement of Tutors' Capabilities

Tutors can be seen as a lubricant within the mentoring system. They take a big role in amplifying the effect of mentoring by supporting the manager and aiding mentors. However, we discovered that tutors were going through diverse difficulties such as lack of perception of their roles as tutors, uncertainty of their capacities, absence of long-term systematic information on the progress of the mentoring project, and problems in the relationship with mentors.

"I wish that the tutor's role can be defined more specifically." (Research participant 5, 20160222)

"In the aspects of management, I think that exchange of information is needed." (Research participant 2, 20160217)

"Please educate the tutors so that they can provide help to the mentors. For instance, career education." (Research participant 4, 20160218)

CONCLUSIONS

As a result, the following actions are necessary to strengthen the tutor's capabilities: arranging orientations on tutors' roles, informing mentors of the tutor's role, arranging a manual on tutors' roles, providing long-term systematic mentoring information, education for tutors and exchanging information through periodic meetings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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